

foodgrains effected from budget (2000-2001) on Public Distribution System (PDS), large stock of foodgrains in Central Pool and ever increasing storage cost and deteriorating quality of foodgrains in the FCI godowns.

The Central Issue Prices (CIP) for BPL families for wheat and rice were raised in order to link the Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) with the CIP. In order to better targetise the food subsidy, the allocation of foodgrains for BPL families has been doubled from 10 Kg. to 20 Kg. per family per month at 50% of economic cost w.e.f. 1.4.2000. The Government has also initiated various steps to increase the offtake of foodgrains from the Central Pool.

The Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) contemplates identification of one crore 'poorest of the poor' families who are not able to purchase foodgrains even at BPL rates around the year. The objective of the scheme is to provide them with foodgrains @25 Kg. per family per month at highly subsidised rates — Rs. 2 a Kg. for wheat and Rs. 3 a Kg for rice. The States/UTs have been requested to identify the Antyodaya families from amongst the number of BPL families estimated for each State/UT.

Keeping in view the extremely poor condition of the Antyodaya families, the Government of India has suggested to the State Governments/UT Administrations to ensure that the end retail price is retained at Rs. 2 a Kg. for wheat and Rs. 3 a Kg. for rice.

Basic Principle of Antyodaya Scheme

2920. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) what is the basic principle of the Antyodaya Scheme;
- (b) whether there is any codified principle for giving benefit under the Scheme;
- (c) whether the State Governments on its own can identify and give benefits to any person as per their wish; and

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(d) whether it is also a fact that the Public Distribution System has failed completely in some States including Orissa as a result thereof the actual beneficiaries in BPL and APL list are not getting the benefit of the subsidy given by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

(SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) Antyodaya Anna Yojana is targeted towards 5% poorest of the poor in the country who are not able to get two square meals a day and are not in a position to buy foodgrains round the year even at BPL rates.

(b) and (c) Antyodaya Anna Yojana launched on 25.12.2000 contemplates identification of one crore poorest of the poor families and providing them with 25 Kg. of foodgrains per family per month at highly subsidised rates of Rs. 2 per Kg. of wheat and Rs. 3 per Kg. of rice. One crore Antyodaya families constitute about 15.33% of the BPL families in the country. The Government of India has requested the State Governments/UTs to identify the Antyodaya families from amongst the number of BPL families within the State/UT. They have been requested to finalise the list of Antyodaya families in a meeting of the Gram Sabha for a Panchayat in the rural areas.

(d) Keeping in view the large number of BPL families in the country, the possibility of omission of some of the deserving families from the list of BPL beneficiaries and issue of BPL cards to them cannot be ruled out.

Identification of beneficiaries namely the population living below poverty line (BPL) is one of the most important features of TPDS which is carried out by States/UTs. Under the guidelines for implementation of TPDS the States/UTs have been asked to include the really poor and vulnerable sections of the society under the BPL category and actively involve the Gram Sabhas and Gram Panchayats in the identification process. The State Governments/UTs have been asked to review the list of BPL families on regular intervals so that the poor and needy are not deprived of the benefits under the TPDS.